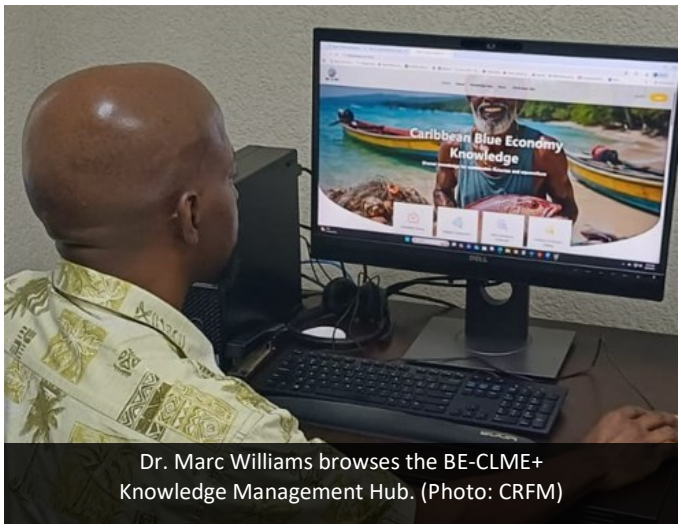
PRESS RELEASE

The Caribbean's Blue Economy Knowledge now has a new home

BE-CLME+ Knowledge Management Platform aims to connect policymakers, fisherfolk, private sector, and communities

Belize City, Belize (CRFM) – The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF), have officially launched an open-access, Caribbean Blue Economy (BE) Knowledge Hub that brings together decades of the region's expertise and insight on fisheries, aquaculture, and marine spatial planning.

The knowledge hub is a permanent, multilingual home for Blue Economy data, best practices, policy tools, and technical insight from across the participating countries–Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, and Saint Lucia—built on CRFM's expertise and the knowledge generated through the BE-CLME+ Project.



Dr. Marc Williams browses the BE-CLME+ Knowledge Management Hub. (Photo: CRFM)

The digital platform is a crucial outcome of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded, *BE-CLME+: Promoting National Blue Economy Priorities Through Marine Spatial Planning in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Plus* project.

Dr. Marc Williams, Executive Director, CRFM, stated, "*The BE-CLME+ Knowledge Management Hub represents the continued drive of the CRFM to make knowledge products more accessible to all stakeholders; connecting policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and communities to the evidence they need to act, adapt, and lead*."

Dr. Williams further elaborated: *"Small-scale fishers, women who process and trade the catch, youth deciding whether this industry has a future worth joining, and Indigenous communities whose stewardship of marine ecosystems spans generations — all will find, in this platform, a resource calibrated to their realities. That means accessible formats, multilingual content, and practical tools that translate regional expertise into actionable guidance for every practitioner in the value chain, including fisherfolk, academics, and policymakers alike*."

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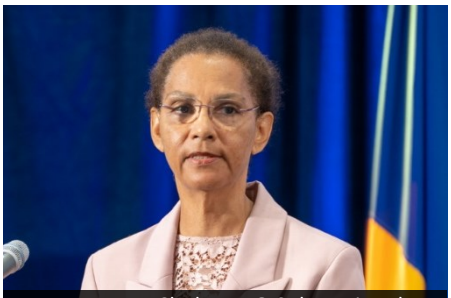
Powered by insights produced through the BE-CLME+ Project and CRFM, the Hub organises technical reports, policy briefs, fact sheets, and multimedia resources across seven thematic areas for easy discovery. Users can search, filter by theme, and access an AI-powered assistant — "Ask BE-CLME" — available in both English and Spanish to help navigate the platform's resources.

Across the six participating countries, governments now have a consolidated evidence base—which can be found at www.beknowledge.crfm.int—to drive marine spatial planning, sharpen national fisheries policy, and attract blue economy investment.


Dr. Renata Clarke, FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean. (Photo: FAO Subregional Office for the Caribbean)

Dr . Renata Clarke, FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean, said, "*The importance of this platform cannot be overstated. It would help to unlock grey literature to better support decision-making by practitioners that is centered on benefits to communities. At present, piles of information and knowledge produced over decades sit unused, on desks and in drawers of national officers*."

With "over USD 200 million in annual Caribbean exports and more than half-a-million jobs" at stake across coastal communities from Belize to Barbados, according to the CRFM Statistics and Information Report – 2021/2022, the sustainable management of marine resources is an economic and food security imperative.

Erick Castro, Principal Executive, CAF

Erick Castro, Principal Executive, CAF, said, "*Advancing a sustainable blue economy requires long-term investment in knowledge, governance, and human capital. Through BE-CLME+, we are helping to build the foundations that enable countries to make informed decisions, strengthen institutions, and unlock opportunities for inclusive and resilient growth. This platform is a tangible example of that commitment, transforming regional knowledge into a shared asset that will continue to generate blue value over time.*"

Sustainability Is Not a Cost — It Is the Business Case

The Caribbean sits at the centre of one of the most biodiverse marine regions on earth, yet a significant share of its seafood continues to be exported as raw, unprocessed product which leaves most of the value, and most of the jobs, somewhere else. Closing that gap is a trade strategy, not a conservation ambition.

The BE-CLME+ Knowledge Management Platform provides the market frameworks, training, and certification pathways for seafood standards, and value chain intelligence that make sustainable seafood

profitable, scalable, and investable; while equipping businesses with the regional data they need to make decisions with confidence.

Since 2023, the BE-CLME+ project has aimed to maintain and preserve cultural heritage through sustainable fisheries management, improved livelihoods, and alternative livelihoods while strengthening the integration of fisheries and ecosystem management to restore, protect, and maintain marine biodiversity, productivity, and resilience of marine ecosystems.

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ABOUT THE BE-CLME+ PROJECT

The Promoting National Blue Economy Priorities Through Marine Spatial Planning in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Plus" project, (BE-CLME+) is a GEF-funded initiative implemented by the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF). This project spans six countries across the Caribbean basin: Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, and Saint Lucia. The project builds the regional systems, knowledge infrastructure, and institutional partnerships required to govern the Caribbean's marine resources sustainably — supporting food security, climate resilience, and inclusive economic growth across coastal and fishing communities.